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Office of City Manager
Craig G. Kocian
City Manager

March 4, 1997

Public Safety Committee
Life Enrichment (Education Partnership) Committee
Oakland, California

Re: A report on the draft *School Safety Plan*

Vice Mayor Miley, Council Member Reid, Board Member Rice, and Members of the Committees:

This report provides an overview of the draft *School Safety Plan* (attached) which is the product of a collaborative effort between the City of Oakland, School District and a number of other agencies and organizations. Staff is recommending that the committees review the reports and provide feedback to the School Safety Task Force, yet postpone formal adoption of the plan until additional public comment can be received.

Background

On March 11, 1996 members of the City Council made a commitment to provide one million dollars to support the School District's School Safety Program with the understanding that the majority of supplanted funds would be used for class size reductions. The Council approved a plan submitted by the Superintendent to utilize $650,000 for class size reduction purposes and $350,000 to expand school safety programs by increasing staffing for Conflict Resolution Trainers (2), Parent Patrol (15), and Campus Supervisors (3). In accepting the plan, the Council emphasized that the one million dollars was a one time grant and mandated the development of a Comprehensive School Safety Plan by the end of the calendar year.

In response to the Council's mandate, the Mayor appointed a Task Force charged with developing the Comprehensive School Safety Plan. Participants in the Task Force included representatives of the Mayor's Office, City Council, Office of the City Manager, School Board, Oakland Unified School District, Police Services Agency, Alameda County Probation Department, Alameda County District Attorney, BART, A.C. Transit, East Bay Regional Parks, local community organizations, and several school sites. The Task Force was divided into six committees (1.Truancy Reduction, 2. Safe Passage, 3. Campus Safety, 4. After-School & Violence Prevention Programs, 5. Inter-Agency Linking: Village Center/Beacon Schools, 6. Alternative Placement & Education) with two co-chairs--one from the district and one from the City--appointed to each. Each committee was tasked with

a specific charge focused on their area of responsibility.

The Task Force was initially convened on August 29 at the Joaquin Miller Community Center for an all day training session on school safety provided by expert consultants paid by the United States Department of Justice. Thereafter the sub-committees independently met to address their specific charges. There was a vast difference in the amount of time and effort volunteered for the sub-committee work. In some cases the sub-committees were enthusiastic and prolific where others were idle and non-productive.

In early November, the Sub-Committee chairs were convened for a status update. They were requested to provide their formatted draft reports by December 4. In December and January, four of the sub-committees submitted reports. They are compiled and formatted in the attached *School Safety Plan*, which was edited in January and February by a majority of the sub-committee chairs. In some areas discussed, there was a difference of opinion between members. Some of the individual committee recommendations are controversial, (e.g. closing all campuses during the school day, requiring students to attend the schools nearest their homes). For the most part, the sub-committees were in strong agreement. The general consensus is reflected in the summary of Findings and Recommendations.

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Findings

Following are findings common to all or most of the subcommittees:

1) School sites tend to mirror the character of the neighborhood of dominant attendance.

2) School sites are, for some, one of the few safe environments in their lives.

3) Truancy and misconduct is most frequent at the Junior High Schools.

4) A multitude of agencies are impacted by and involved in school site safety. More collaboration, coordination and cooperation will greatly improve their efficiency.

5) School safety is not the District's top priority, but it should be.

6) School sites emergency preparedness can be substantially improved.

7) Specific goals, time lines, a centralized data collection mechanism and specifically designated personnel are needed to ensure, monitor and evaluate school safety.

Recommendations

Following are the overall recommendations prepared by the Task Force. Each

subcommittee made additional recommendations that are detailed within the plan:

1) Create a multi-agency School Safety Plan Implementation Committee charged with overseeing the implementation of the *School Safety Plan*.

2) Hire a full time School Safety Coordinator and half-time clerical support staff to support the Committee and undertake responsibility for implementing the *School Safety Plan*.

3) Hire a full time Emergency Preparedness Coordinator and half-time clerical support staff to fully implement the District's Emergency Preparedness plan and work with school sites that have not created nor implemented their plans .

4) Include school site safety in the portfolio of responsibilities for all school principals to ensure that principals are responsible and held accountable.

5) By March 1988, require each school site to have completed site specific School Site Safety and Emergency Preparedness Plans.

6) Ensure that District policy and practice conforms with State law with respect to mandatory and uniform reporting of crimes and disruptive incidents.

7) Undertake a multi-level, multi-agency approach to implementing all recommendations in the *School Safety Plan*.

8) Coordinate the gathering and analysis of data related to school safety and propose state legislation to remove "confidentiality" barriers.

Conclusion

The School Safety Task Force has undertaken considerable research and effort to develop the concepts outlined in the *School Safety Plan*. However, public input into the ideas expressed in the document, some of which are controversial, will be needed before the document is formally adopted. After adoption, the Implementation Committee will need to refine the concepts into specific objectives and action steps, identify the responsible agencies, prepare cost estimates for the proposals and identify funding resources. It is anticipated that substantial Federal and State funds will be available in the near future to fund crime reduction/violence prevention efforts. If the Committee is well coordinated, it may be able to acquire outside funding sources.

Staff Recommendations

1) Convene a special session of the Education Partnership Committee, or an ad hoc committee composed of Council members and School Board Members, to receive greater public comment and input on this report since, to date, the recommendations contained in the draft plan have not been submitted to the broader Oakland community. The sub-

committee chairs will be present and available to present their detailed findings and recommendations.

2) Direct staff to recommend funding sources for the City's share of the two full time and two half time positions recommended. Recommend to the School Board that they do the same.

Respectfully submitted,

P. LAMONT EWELL
Acting City Manager

for

MIKE A. NISPEROS JR.
Public Safety Liaison
School Safety Task Force Coordinator

$1,000,000 School Safety Program Funds

• Class Size Reduction (20 FTE's)	$ 650,000
• Conflict Resolution	$ 77,000
• Parent Safety Patrols	$ 73,000
• Campus Supervisors	$ 156,882
• Youth Alive (Teens-On-Target)	$ 50,000
• Total	$1,006,882

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COMPREHENSIVE

SCHOOL SAFETY PLAN

Prepared by the School Safety Task Force, including representatives from:

- Mayor's Office
- City Council
- Office of the City Manager
- School Board
- Oakland Unified School District
- Police Services Agency
- Alameda County Probation Department
- Alameda County District Attorney
- BART
- A.C. Transit
- East Bay Regional Parks
- local community organizations
- school sites

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BACKGROUND

While the safety and education of young people in Oakland has long been a high priority for the Oakland community and its elected officials, efforts in 1996 were especially focused and have resulted in a number of new initiatives that are presently underway. In June, the City Council adopted the *City of Oakland Youth Policy*, a comprehensive plan that addresses youth quality of life issues and sets the direction for youth-services planning, delivery, and resource allocation. In July, the Council adopted the *Three Year Strategic Plan for Violence Prevention* which includes "providing alternatives to violence for youth" as one of its seven objectives. Both plans were developed in concert with each other and act as companion documents. In November, voters passed the "Kids First Initiative" which annually allocates 2.5% of the City's General Fund budget to be used for youth programs. In January, 1997, the Alameda County Probation Department established a multi-agency task force to develop a plan to reduce juvenile crime and coordinate the efforts of agencies serving youth.

In the summer of 1996, the City Council provided a one time grant of $1 million to the Oakland Unified School District (OUSD) to be used for class size reduction and enhanced school safety. The City Council adopted the Superintendents proposal to use $650,000.00 for class size reduction and $350,000.00 for school safety programs. Council directed that a comprehensive School Safety Plan be developed. In August, Mayor Elihu Harris convened the School Safety Task Force which has been working on the plan since that date. Participants in the Task Force include representatives of the Mayor's Office, City Council, Office of the City Manager, School Board, Oakland Unified School District, Police Services Agency, Alameda County Probation Department, Alameda County District Attorney, BART, A.C. Transit, East Bay Regional Parks, local community organizations, and several school sites.

TASK FORCE EFFORTS

A one-day session was held on August 29, 1996 where School Safety Task Force members received training and information, provided by the United states Department of Justice, from Chief Gary S. Higgins, retired, Jacksonville Florida, and Ronald D. Stephens, executive director of the National School Safety Center. At the close of the session, the Task Force was divided into six subcommittees:

- Campus Safety
- Truancy Reduction
- Alternative Placement and Education
- After School and Violence Prevention Programs
- Interagency Linking (Village Centers/Beacon Schools)
- Safe Passage

Committees have met since that date to perform research and produce their draft plans. Four of the subcommittees - Campus Safety, Truancy Reduction, Safe Passage and Alternative Placement and Education - produced substantial materials that are summarized in the *School Safety Plan*. However, it should be recognized the City Council has already made Village Centers/Beacon Schools a priority through the adoption of the *Youth Policy*. Implementation efforts are already moving forward, primarily through private initiatives.

SCHOOL SAFETY TASK FORCE

SCOPE OF WORK

The California Education Code provides "...unless otherwise exempted, persons between the ages of six and sixteen, or sixteen and eighteen are subject to compulsory full-time education or compulsory continuation education and **shall** attend the public day school or continuation school or classes..."(emphasis added). The Constitution of the State of California, amended by its constituency, proclaims, "...all students and staff of public primary, elementary, junior high and high schools have the inalienable right to attend campuses which are safe, secure and peaceful...". The Oakland Unified School District and City of Oakland have the legal and ethical responsibility of providing safe schools. This is a vast responsibility that extends from crime and violence to natural disasters.

Overall, emphasis by the School District on school safety is inadequate relative to the seriousness of the issue. Undertakings that are mandated by the District, such as the 1992 school safety plan effort and post-Loma Prieta Earthquake emergency preparedness effort, have not been completed nor sustained. Even during development of this plan, District support for the Mayor's School Safety Task Force has been inconsistent. It is essential, if any real progress is to be made on this issue, that everyone involved in school safety recognize the importance of school safety and make it a priority. The perception of safety directly relates to the learning capacity of students and instructional ability of teachers. Inattention to school safety can result in increased litigation costs and may affect outside funding resources that are tied to completion and implementation of state or federally mandated school safety plans.

FINDINGS

The following are findings common to all or most of the subcommittees:

1) School sites tend to mirror the character of the neighborhood of dominant attendance, i.e. if the surroundings are volatile, the school will likely be unsettled as well.

2) Nevertheless, school sites are relatively safe environments. For some students, they are one of the few safe environments in their lives.

3) Criminal, violent, or otherwise disturbing behavior is more frequent at the junior high school level than the high school or elementary school levels. Similarly, truancy rises dramatically at the junior high school level.

4) A multitude of agencies are impacted by and involved in school site safety. These include the School District, Police Services Agency, Office of Parks, Recreation and Cultural Affairs, Alameda County Probation Department, Alameda County District Attorney, BART, AC Transit, and East Bay Regional Parks, among others.

5) Monitoring the implementation of school site safety efforts by the District Administration has not been consistent, nor as great as needed. Despite efforts undertaken in 1992, the existence and use of school site safety plans at the individual campuses is not universal and varies from site to site.

6) While substantial progress has been made in emergency preparedness, not all school sites have completed nor implemented their emergency preparedness plans. The District Administration has not completed all of the implementation activities, recommended by the Fire Services Agency's

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Office of Emergency Services, that are within its purview.

7) There is no clear process by which progress (or the lack thereof) is measured and where accountability is assigned as it relates to school safety. Specific goals, time lines, a centralized data collection mechanism and specifically designated personnel are essential to ensuring, monitoring and evaluating progress.

RECOMMENDATIONS

While each Task Force area has a unique list of specific actions, a number of comprehensive activities need to be undertaken to enhance school safety. Of the greatest importance is the development of a body that is responsible and accountable for implementing the *School Safety Plan*. Without such an entity, and appropriate staffing, the concepts embodied in this document are unlikely to become realized.

Following are the overall Task Force recommendations:

1) Create a multi-agency School Safety Plan Implementation Committee charged with overseeing the implementation of the *School Safety Plan*. Participants in the Committee should include the following agency heads, or their direct representatives:

A.C. Transit
Alameda County District Attorney
Alameda County Juvenile Court Presiding Judge
Alameda County Sheriff
Alameda County Office of Education
Alameda County Probation Department
Alameda County Social Services
Chamber of Commerce
Chief of Police
Community Based Organizations
Director of the Office of Emergency Services, Fire Services Agency
Mayor of Oakland
Parent Representative(s)
President of the School Board
Student Representative(s)
Superintendent of Schools

2) Hire a full time School Safety Coordinator and half-time clerical support staff to support the Committee and undertake responsibility for implementing the School Safety Plan, working closely with

appropriate City offices and the District. Salary for these positions should be paid equally by the City and School District. The staff should be hired by and report directly to the oversight committee, serving as an employee of the School District. Funding through the "Kids First" Initiative should be explored.

3) **Hire a full time Emergency Preparedness Coordinator and half-time clerical support staff to fully implement the District's Emergency Preparedness plan and work with school sites that have not created nor implemented their plans.** Salary for these positions should be paid equally by the City and School District. The staff should be hired by and report directly to the oversight committee, serving as an employee of the Fire Service Agency's Office of Emergency Services. Funding through the "Kids First" Initiative should be explored.

4) **Include school site safety in the portfolio of responsibilities for all school principals to ensure that principals are aware of their responsibility and are held accountable by the School District.**

5) **By March 1988, require each school site to prepare School Site Safety and Emergency Preparedness Plans based on a model promulgated by the School Safety Plan Oversight Committee.** Each plan should be reviewed annually and be approved by the School Safety Plan Oversight Committee. The School Principal, Community Policing Officer, Neighborhood Crime Prevention Council, security personnel at the school, students, parents, local merchants, and nearby home alert block captains should participate in development of the plan. The City Office of Emergency Services, within the Fire Services Agency, should provide support and guidance to the effort.

6) **Ensure that District policy and practice conforms with State law with respect to mandatory and uniform reporting of crimes and disruptive incidents occurring on, or impacting schools.** Identify consequences for noncompliance.

7) **Undertake a multi-level, multi-agency approach to implementing all recommendations in the *School Safety Plan*.** For too long independent agencies have attempted to grapple with school safety, resulting in duplication of efforts and gaps in data and services. All actions included in the plan should be implemented through a collaborative approach involving all appropriate agencies.

8) **Coordinate the gathering and analysis of data related to school safety within the City, School District and other appropriate agencies.** Effective planning and evaluation require access to recent and accurate data from a variety of sources. Absent accurate and compatible data sources, it is difficult to paint an accurate picture of school site safety issues in Oakland.

CAMPUS SAFETY COMMITTEE

SCOPE OF WORK

The Campus Safety Committee was responsible for identifying procedures for developing and implementing school safety plans at each school site within the City of Oakland. In the course of their work, the Committee reviewed and identified elements that would contribute to a violence-free school environment, outlined components of a successful school safety plan, evaluated linkages between different agencies involved at the campuses, and considered the relationship between OUSD officers and the Police Services Agency (PSA).

The subcommittee evaluated data provided by the PSA to understand crime patterns in and around school sites. They analyzed the data geographically, by grade levels, and by types of incidents affecting campus safety (e.g. weapons possession, assaults, etc.) in order to begin to identify high priority areas or issues. The information was mapped and analyzed by geographic areas to determine the "challenged sites" within the City of Oakland -- i.e., campuses with multiple violence indicators such as high crime statistics in surrounding neighborhoods, high number of suspension and expulsion statistics, high incident of weapon/drug seizures, high incidents of on-campus violence, etc.

The subcommittee also administered two surveys of individuals who dealt directly with students on campus safety issues (i.e., patrol officers, campus supervisors, etc.) and those who were responsible in the schools for safety issues (i.e., school administrators). A total of 31 responses were provided to the first survey and 61 responses to the second. Survey results generated many findings, only a portion of which are included herein.

FINDINGS

1) There is no school safety program in place in the City of Oakland. In 1992, OUSD began implementing a School Safety Plan at each of the campuses. However, this effort was not mandated, centralized, or monitored so it is no longer relevant, up-to-date, nor consistently utilized by staff. In addition, the 1992 effort did not include any clear process by which progress (or lack thereof) could be measured and accountability assigned.

2) The number of known OUSD students referred to the Discipline Hearing Panel (DHP) for the commission of a crime or rule violation is less than 1% of student population.

3) Assault, battery, menace and threat cases are the dominant type of crimes committed upon persons within the district. Victims include students, staff, and members of the outside community.

4) Behavior which inhibits the establishment of an environment conducive to learning is more frequent at the junior high school grade-level than high school or elementary school grade levels. Junior High School male students lead the assault, battery, menace and threat category in referrals to the Discipline Hearing Panel.

5) The number of crimes committed that include the use of a weapon are dramatically lower than the reported offenses involving possession of weapons.

6) Incidents of burglary and vandalism are high district-wide.

7) Many service providers are extremely skeptical regarding the commitment to ensuring campus safety made by the City and the School District. The level of skepticism occurs in many parts of the system from

patrol officers to principals and is rooted in a variety of past failed projects related to campus safety.

8) In the area of whether the School District is doing its part regarding school safety, only 25% of campus security staff surveyed agreed this was true while 62% of the principal staff agreed this was true.

9) Survey respondents were confident that the police were well trained to deal with the schools and that police and campus security worked well together. However, they indicated they would like more involvement by the Probation Department in campus safety and more school officials were needed on campus. There was a low confidence that teachers and school officials were adequately trained to deal with safety issues.

10) Respondents did not feel that campus perimeters were adequately patrolled and secured. They were lukewarm on the idea that a student safety patrol would make campuses safer.

11) Significantly more campus security staff thought that students were likely to become victims of a crime than did principals. Campus security staff also believed, to a slightly higher degree than principals, that teachers were also likely to be victims of a crime during their careers.

12) Both security staff and principals felt that student involvement was both valuable and necessary to address campus safety.

13) Police officers working in the schools not only enhance school safety, but act as important role models, counselors, and mentors for youth. High turnover and changing positions has an adverse affect on students and should be minimized. The District is in need of a stable patrol officer force.

RECOMMENDATIONS

For real change to be made in the area of school site safety, each school site will need to undertake an analysis of its unique problems and needs and develop a site-specific safety plan. However, the individual sites cannot accomplish this responsibility without the support of the District Administration, City, and Implementation Committee. Community policing officers, neighborhood crime prevention councils, and emergency preparedness staff are among the entities that will need to be involved in the development of the campus safety plans. Students should also be allowed to actively participate in decision making processes that affect campus safety. Following are the recommendations from the Campus Safety Committee.

1. Establish Safety Plans at all School Sites by March 1998. Since so many entities are involved in campus safety, a successful campus safety plan program must address the issue from a number of perspectives. These include the: A) informal and social perspective; and, B) instructional and educational perspective. Furthermore, the District needs to evaluate school safety from the C) policy perspective; D) formal and institutional perspective; and, E) physical perspective[1].

A. Informal and Social - this perspective includes recognizing the effect

[1] Useful resources include: Safe Schools - A Planning Guide for Action, 1995 Edition, California Department of Education, School Safety and Violence Prevention Office, Office of the California Attorney General Crime and Violence Prevention Center, Sacramento, and Safe Schools - A Handbook for Violence Prevention, 1995 Edition, Ronald D. Stephens, National Educational Service, Bloomington, Indiana.

the informal social and peer network has on the school site environment and conduct of youth. Cultural awareness, peer counseling and peer role modeling, conflict resolution, and use of parent and/or community volunteers are examples of some of the techniques that a safety plan could include. District staff should instill in each student and employee the concept that some things are just not supposed to happen on school campuses. They should encourage reporting of situations which may adversely affect the safe conduct of a school day and eliminate the stigma associated with reporting misconduct by encouraging information sharing and offering anonymity

B. Instructional and Educational - this technique utilizes classroom based activities which have the potential to positively affect school site safety. Some of the activities that should be explored include citizenship awareness instruction and expectations; annual student orientation expressing standards, expectations, and consequences for conduct; and annual teacher and support staff orientation expressing standards, expectations and consequences for conduct, work performance and attendance. Each orientation should additionally prepare staff and students to observe, report and react accordingly if the following emergencies are encountered: violence; shootings, fights or weapons possessions; unauthorized persons entering campus; abductions; fires; earthquakes; HAZMAT conditions; bomb threats; and drug possession or sales. The orientation should also provide information on identifying the need for and methods to obtain emergency medical response.

C. Policy - the District operates under multiple policies that directly affect school site safety. A number of these need to be reevaluated or amended.

[1] Establish a policy for supervision, parental involvement, and police oversight for curricular and extra-curricular events. Normal school instructional days, sporting events such as football or basketball games, and other events tied to the educational process or taking place at school sites should be evaluated for supervisory needs.

[2] Require a plan for supervision at dances and concerts. The planning process should address the immediate community's concerns, with their input and concurrence. Plans should recognize that limited resources may prevent the police from securing such events and other alternative measures should be pursued.

[3] Continue to explore the advantages and disadvantages of intensive security measures such as closing high school campuses and selective use of metal detectors.

[4] Evaluate the supervision and reporting relationships of OUSD Campus Supervisors. The supervisors are quasi-autonomous employees who work at, but are not always responsible to a specific school site administrator. Work requirements, expectations and duties often vary from one site to another. Consequently campus supervisors may be less-than-effective at one site while exemplary at another. The Administration should divide the district geographically and assign supervisors to work with the staff in their respective areas. The supervisory personnel should have the authority to set, monitor, and encourage compliance with standardized requirements and duties.

D. Formal and Institutional - this perspective recognizes that the School

District is not the only agency directly involved in school site safety and that all of the involved entities should be actively involved in development of the school site safety plans.

[1] Develop and implement the site-specific School Safety Plans in collaboration with the City's community oriented policing efforts. Community policing officers, neighborhood crime prevention councils, and other appropriate entities must be actively involved in the school sites. The new 57 community policing beat structure is relatively congruent with OUSD school sites, with a beat officer and neighborhood services coordinator to be assigned to each beat. School sites appear to be natural facilities to support the community policing effort; they could house offices for community policing officers and/or Neighborhood Crime Prevention Councils (NCPCs), and provide meeting spaces that will facilitate community participation in safe school districts.

E. Physical - this aspect of the plans would acknowledge that the appearance of and accessibility to campuses directly impact school site safety. All plans need to take the unique nature of their campuses into consideration.

[1] Prevent crime, disruption and violence through reducing site access. Perimeter chain-link fencing is no longer an adequate measure for prevention of intrusion due to its ineffectiveness and costly maintenance. New ways of lighting facilities at night and providing for intrusion alarm responses need to be explored.

[2] Establish a high standard for the physical appearance and maintenance of the school sites. Poor maintenance shows a disrespect for the school site that is instilled in the youth who, in turn, further vandalize or graffiti the school. OUSD's graffiti abatement program is effective at combating the breeding nature of graffiti vandalism in that site administrators can by-pass the normal work order process when requesting graffiti elimination. As a result, obscene and racially motivated defacement can be eradicated in less than a day with minor incidents removed within two days. Other means to expedite and enhance maintenance should be explored.

2) Establish site safety committees at each educational and support program facility. Each group should be of manageable size and include the principal, teachers, service providers, the community policing officer for the site, students and neighborhood representatives. The site committees will be responsible for preparing a site-specific safety plan that is based on its specific needs. Periodic meetings should be held for the purpose of exchanging information, identifying problems and jointly resolving them.

3) Consider amending District attendance policy so that students at all grade levels attend their neighborhood schools. Experience has shown that violent and disruptive activity often occur as a result of neighborhood or turf issues. Also, the distances children must travel to cross-town schools leaves them without adult supervision and guidance for long periods of time. Neighborhood-based schools have the potential to instill a renewed sense of pride in the neighborhood and its schools.

4) Analyze and evaluate the student discipline policy (Administrative Bulletin 6010). The Implementation Committee should explore new methods for discipline

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which discourage long-term suspension and expulsion except for firearms and weapons charges. Short and long-term detention halls, weekend schools, and school site beautification assignments could be used as alternative discipline methods. It is recommended that involuntary transfer be used as a last resort when discipline goals are not achieved since moving a problem from place-to-place does not effect a solution.

5) Focus on and give additional resources and support to those school sites facing extraordinary obstacles and which are defined as challenged sites. In this time of limited resources, it is necessary to prioritize expenditures to enhance safety based upon need. Too often the sites with the greatest need have the most limited resources. By focusing resources on the most challenged sites, the District can make substantial progress at those sites, while learning techniques that can be utilized elsewhere. The greatest emphasis should be focused at the area of greatest need. The Junior High Schools, in particular, should be the focus of initial and immediate attention since data shows that these are the grade levels where a high level of incidents begin for many young people.

6) Establish and maintain a training program for all school officials, whether administrators or teachers on how to handle safety issues on campus. This should be a joint venture between the District and the Police Services Agency.

7) Hold parents accountable for their children's conduct. The District should consider fining or charging parents when the youth's actions result in increased costs to the District. Another option to explore is requiring the parent to attend school for a period of time with their child as penalty for the child's actions.

8) Maintain the existing school officer reporting relationship. The present arrangement where the officers are employed by the District, yet work closely with the PSA allows for focused services to be provided to youth and is more cost efficient than transferring them into the PSA. Existing lines of communication through the emergency dispatcher and the Lieutenant who supervises the OUSD officers keep OUSD and PSA staff in close contact and has resulted in enhanced communication and collaboration. However, the School District needs to undertake a retention strategy, such as evaluating the pay rate of the officers, in order to reduce staff turnover and nurture the important relationships between students and the officers.

TRUANCY COMMITTEE

SCOPE OF WORK

The truancy subcommittee met on eight occasions between August 29th and December 4, 1996. The committee also participated with the Oakland Police Services Agency in an attendance retneval sweep and interview sessions with truants on October 17th at Oakland High School in an attempt to better understand the issue of truancy.

The subcommittee has come to recognize that truancy problem fall along a continuum, from occasional to chronic. Members decided to focus primarily on the occasional truant population for potential solutions as this is a population the committee felt could, with prevention and early intervention strategies, be impacted in the short-term. The more difficult, chronic truant population will require further long-term, in-depth study.

FINDINGS

1) Truancy is a significant problem affecting multiple agencies through increased crime, increased activity, and lost revenue. During a one month period in the fall of 1997, 702 students were classified as truant based on OUSD's definition (i.e., absence without a valid excuse 3 days in one year or tardy in excess of 30 minutes on each of more than 3 days in 1 year.) East Bay Regional Park District police report that as many as 250 students are picked up in the parks during a typical week. The Police Services Agency note that when truancy sweeps in neighborhoods around schools are conducted regularly, residential burglary rates drop. Truancy also has a significant economic impact in lost Average Daily Attendance (A.D.A.) revenue for the school district and personnel costs to police agencies. OUSD estimates that up to $4 million per year in A.D.A. is lost due to unexcused absences.

2) Existing truancy related processes are unclear, and unequally/sporadically enforced. Some processes, such as the state mandated Student Attendance Review Board (SARB), implemented collaboratively by the school district and the District Attorney's office, are labor intensive and difficult to enforce.

3) A clear city-wide truancy policy understood by the public and all affected agencies does not exist. While the recent revision of the School District's Administrative Bulletin No. 6005 - Attendance Policy is a positive start, truancy has city-wide, multi-agency implications that are beyond the capability of the School District alone to address. Currently, some police agencies impacted by the truancy problem are not aware of the School District's truancy policy, how it is implemented, and what their role is. Absent a clear understanding of the District's policy by all agencies involved, it will be less effective than it can be.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1) Fully enact and monitor Section 7, Article 10 "Teacher Commitment Program" of the Oakland Education Association contract with the Oakland Unified School District.

This article reads, *"The 'Teacher Commitment Program' shall include a special effort to reach parents/care givers of students considered to be at-risk of 'falling through the cracks' in the school system. At-risk students are to be identified by their attendance, academic performance and/or classroom conduct. The district shall conduct this program so as to enable each faculty to: identify at-risk students by the end of the fourth week of each semester; and, contact, by the end of the sixth week of each semester, by letter, or for parents of all such students for which they have current phone numbers by phone."*

Also, *"The district shall enable each teacher to fill the following expectations:*

(1) Each elementary teacher shall contact all parents/care givers of each at-risk student by letter or telephone and arrange a conference with the parent/care giver and child.

(2) Each secondary 'homeroom' teacher shall contact parents/care givers of each at-risk homeroom student by telephone or letter; alert the parent of problems in the at-risk homeroom and other classes; encourage the parent to call the appropriate teachers to set up conferences; and, provide extension numbers and conference periods of the other teacher(s) to facilitate contact. If a secondary school does not have a 'homeroom' in the regular day program, the school shall facilitate a system whereby parents are contacted."

2) Build on the School District's existing Student Attendance Review Team (SART) process, by continuing the training of school SART members and monitoring school sites for full implementation. Since this process has proven to be an effective tool in addressing attendance and other problems, the district should provide greater levels of support, training and monitoring. At present, not all school sites currently have a trained, fully operational SART team, yet are in need of one.

3) Close all school campuses. Other school districts throughout California have closed campuses, a proven deterrent to truancy and other problems. It is understood that such a policy will have some short term financial impact on the district but, in the long run, should save the district A.D.A. funds. Providing lunch services to all students will be an issue, however, outside food vendors should be able to alleviate much of the problem.

4) Establish a truancy court in Oakland. The truancy court could make use of 601 petitions to the court in charging truant youth, and/or State Education Code Section 48264 in charging parents with a misdemeanor for students not attending school. The School District's Student Attendance Review Board (SARB) should refer cases to the truancy court where students/parents or guardians would be subject to juvenile court jurisdiction and possible sanctions. This strategy would require funding for court staff to process 601 petitions.

5) Establish a day-time curfew in the City of Oakland and Alameda County. Several cities in California - Monrovia, Fontana and Rialto - have enacted such an ordinance with significant results. Under the ordinance, students receive tickets and must appear in juvenile traffic court with their parents and can face suspension or loss of driving privileges and fines of up to $300, part of which is usually suspended if a student avoids unauthorized absences the following semester.

6) Develop a regularized communication system between school sites/district and Alameda County Probation Department. Currently, communication between the district and the probation department is sporadic, allowing students on probation to fall through the cracks even though all students on probation must, as a condition of their probation, regularly attend school. Those that violate this part of their probation are not currently monitored for compliance by the District.

ALTERNATIVE PLACEMENT & EDUCATION COMMITTEE

SCOPE OF WORK

The Alternative Placement and Education Sub-Committee met on three occasions during November and December, 1996. The sub-committee focused its efforts primarily on examining pilot programs currently underway within the Oakland Unified School District that serve those students most in need of intervention services.

Of special interest was the Temporary Alternative Placement center (TAP), located at the Shiloh Christian Fellowship Church in East Oakland. The program is designed for students who are awaiting an expulsion hearing and acts as alternative placement for students placed on suspended expulsion by the Board of Education for assault, drugs or weapons. The mission of the program is to provide continuing quality education for students. During the 1995-96 school year, the Pupil Discipline Hearing Panel (DHP), which hears these cases that may be ultimately directed to a TAP center, handled 472 hearings for disciplinary action.

During the past year through a multi-agency collaborative, the Shiloh TAP center has been the recipient of special resources in addition to its regular academic program and is viewed as a potential intervention model for the district. The Office of Health and Safety Programs (OHSP) has funded Youth Alive/Teens On Target to provide a violence prevention curriculum that focuses on street and domestic violence with an emphasis on weapons. The curriculum was written and produced by students from Castlemont High School and, as such, has a strong youth voice. Discussions on violence prevention are held once per week, with Sherman Spears of Teens On Target acting as the facilitator/coordinator. In addition, the Shiloh TAP has made a concerted effort to reach out and involve parents and guardians during the past year. In particular, OHSP's Conflict Resolution Program has trained Shiloh TAP students and parents together in conflict resolution techniques.

Potential exists for further enhancement of the programming at the Shiloh facility. In August of 1996, a collaboration of Shiloh TAP, OHSP and Youth Alive staff developed and submitted a grant proposal, "East Oakland Partnership to Reduce Juvenile Gun Violence" to the U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention. According to recent contacts with the U.S. Department of Justice, the grant will probably be funded. The grant would fund a variety of student/parent supports including case management, career development, training for students as peer educators, expansion of the Teens On Target curriculum and program, and parenting skills training. The program will be carefully evaluated.

The need for adequate alternative placement facilities and programs is made more acute by the passage of AB 922 which prohibits the School District from expelling students for disciplinary problems. This increases the need for adequate space and transformational curriculum and programs to meet the needs of students who may have previously been expelled.

FINDINGS

1) Students that attend alternative placement sites often do not have access to curriculum and services that are available at traditional sites, yet they are in particular need of these services. Alternative sites often have abbreviated school days, limited physical facilities, and do not generally have libraries or computer laboratories.

2) Alternative sites are, at times, viewed as holding places for the students. However, a number of students spend a considerable amount of their school year at the alternative sites.

3) Recent information indicates that TAP sites are not being fully utilized and, contrary to expectations, fewer students are being sent to alternative placement after passage of AB 922. Instead, students are being returned to their original school with little or no additional support services being provided.

4) Site personnel have little or no involvement in planning services for the sites or in anticipating referrals.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1) **Support further collaborations**, similar to what is occurring at the Shiloh TAP, within the District's Alternative Education Program.

2) **Ensure that programs at all alternative sites include the following elements:**

[1] quality education that facilitates the student's return to school at the appropriate grade level or higher;

[2] violence prevention and/or conflict resolution training that will help the student prevent repeated involvement with violence;

[3] curriculum that improves the student's life skills for attaining success nonviolently (goal setting ability, communication, job development skills, etc.).

3) **Undertake efforts to identify funding for a case manager at alternative sites who will link students and their families with support services.** Youth that have acted out in such a manner as to require placement at an alternative site often face a multitude of issues. A case manager is needed to assist them and their families in facing their issues and working with the many bureaucracies that have an interest in the youth/family.

4) **Evaluate each student upon entry and exit.** The entry assessment should be used to identify the students' unique needs. This should include review of prior attendance record, incident reports, probation records, criminal justice records, grade point average, and other relevant factors. The exit evaluation should ascertain the change that has taken place. Aspects such as literacy, violence prevention and life skills, and other educational skills should be assessed. A follow up evaluation after one year should also take place using the original criteria/data gathered upon entry and exit in order to see if a sustainable change has taken place.

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5) Evaluate the existing referral process to Alternative Placement sites to ensure that all students are placed at appropriate facilities based upon a comprehensive understanding of the student and his/her needs.

6) Create an Alternative Placement and Education committee to further refine the recommendations contained in the School Safety Plan. The committee should include District Staff, including Alternative Education site personnel, youth who have attended TAP centers, parents, and appropriate City and County staff, among others. This committee should identify the types of curriculum and programs that will provide meaningful support to youth who attend TAP centers, to insure that students are properly referred to Alternative Placement sites.

SAFE PASSAGE COMMITTEE

SCOPE OF WORK

The Safe Passage Committee met during the months of October through December. Their discussions focused on the following issues:

- A.C. Transit scheduling/student bus behavior
- Neighborhood "hot spots"
- School Campus Security
- Truancy
- Traffic deterrents (lights, stop signs, speed bumps)
- Pedestrian safety

A number of issues arise relating to school safety as students travel to and from school. During these time periods, they have less adult supervision and are more susceptible to negative influences or becoming victims of crime. A 1995 study by the Ad Hoc Committee on a Public Health Approach to Violence found that most crime involving youth as victims or perpetrators took place in the hours immediately after the close of school.

FINDINGS

1) A substantial number of students ride the bus to and from school. While they are on the bus, some of the students engage in disruptive behavior which is threatening, menacing or disturbing the peace of the driver, other students, and other passengers on the bus.

2) During student dismissal times, there are certain locations (e.g. 35th Avenue and MacArthur Boulevard) which become "hot spots" for disruptive behavior. These locations are largely determined by bus routes and concurrent dismissal times.

3) The presence of adults and authority figures along transit routes and about campus during the times when students are coming to or leaving from school has a strong deterrent effect on student misbehavior and strong positive contributor to the overall perception of safety.

4) Truant students have a disruptive effect when they congregate near campus or go to other schools. There is a clear need for truancy centers with comprehensive student services.

5) There are dangerous pedestrian crossing spots which create safety risks for students and other pedestrians, particularly during periods of heavy traffic.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1) Hire a minimum six (6) monitors to ride the busses at specific times on designated lines. These monitors would define appropriate conduct on the bus and should be assigned to lines or locations where high levels of activity take place.

2) Identify and provide extra PSA presence at "hot spots" during student dismissal times, (e.g. 35th Avenue and MacArthur Boulevard). Recent changes in police scheduling has revised officer shift changes so that they are several hours after the close of school, with an overlap of two shifts during the late afternoon. While this has helped address criminal or nuisance activity, particular attention should be placed upon the hot spots.

3) Maintain high visibility supervision at and around campus'; i.e. campus supervisors, parent patrol, neighborhood watch, beat officers, etc.

4) Fund and implement truancy centers with comprehensive student services; i.e. assessment, counseling, etc.

5) Identify dangerous pedestrian crossing spots and design an educational campaign to increase youth/senior safety.

The Committee also recommends three yearly meetings for its members to review Safe Passage/A.C. Transit Schedules in early August, October and early April.

ACCOUNTABILITY & EVALUATION

The *School Safety Plan* reflects a broad level of analysis of need relating to school safety. For this plan to be implemented, it must be refined into measurable goals/objectives, and actions. The Implementation Committee should take the broad framework contained in this plan, identify the specific actions steps that need to be undertaken, and develop time lines, responsible parties, resource needs, etc. that will give the plan a greater level of specificity. The Committee should also further assess the constraints described in this document (see below) and identify means to mitigate the constraints. Without this greater level of specificity and analysis, the plan will remain a written document, as opposed to a live framework to guide work efforts.

Furthermore, successful implementation the School Safety Plan is contingent upon accountability and proper evaluation. The City, School District, parents, and youth, etc. who are given expectations upon the adoption of the plan must continue to monitor implementation progress made by the Implementation Committee. Likewise, the Committee must make a long term commitment to oversee and monitor the specific implementation efforts and hold accountable those organizations responsible for undertaking some of the proposed actions. It is recommended that the Committee provide quarterly progress reports to the City Council and School Board.

Evaluation throughout the implementation process will be needed to ascertain whether progress is being made toward the overall goal of enhancing school safety. Crime statistics, incident reports, surveys, and anecdotal evidence should all be gathered to see if any real or perceived change is taking place. Data resources within the City, School District, and other agencies should be identified and made compatible, in terms of geographic area, population evaluated, age evaluated, etc. Pursuant to the evaluation outcomes, the specific actions contained in the plan may need to be retooled or refined. By evaluating changes in school safety on a periodic basis, implementation efforts will be able to address issues as they arise and the plan will continue to be a live document.

FINANCIAL RESOURCES

While making a real, long term impact on school safety will take considerable resources, moving the School Safety Plan into the implementation stage is the necessary next step. The Task Force recommends that the City and School District jointly fund several new positions -- School Safety Coordinator, Emergency Preparedness Coordinator, and 2 half-time support staff. These individuals will be responsible for facilitating implementation of the *School Safety Plan* and furthering implementation of the Emergency Preparedness plan. They will staff the Implementation Committee, work with the school sites on the site specific plans and implementation efforts. The Task Force strongly believes that full implementation of the *School Safety Plan* is unlikely without dedicated full time staff resources. The School Safety Coordinator and the half time support staff should be School District employees. The Emergency Preparedness Coordinator and half time support staff should be City employees. All the staff should be equally funded by the School District and the City, and should hired by and report directly to the Implementation Committee.

As the Committee refines the recommendations contained in the *School Safety Plan* into specific goals, objectives,

and action steps, they should also develop cost projections associated with implementation. These, together with the revised action steps, should be presented in their quarterly progress reports to the City and School District for their review In doing so, the Committee should attempt to identify resources, including federal and state grants, foundation funds, etc., that may be available to assist in implementation.

IMPEDIMENTS

It must be said that one of the greatest potential impediments is the amount of effort needed to sustain, over a long period of time, the focus needed to ensure implementation of the *School Safety Plan*. The School District has begun a number of admirable efforts in the past that have seen some progress, but have never been fully implemented. For the *School Safety Plan* to be fully implemented, both the City and School District will need to place consistent emphasis upon the importance of school safety. They will also need to place adequate resources behind the implementation efforts, even if this requires evaluating school safety costs relative to other expenditures.

Information sharing is essential. Data collection/reporting systems which are not easily cross-referenced will seriously impede the Implementation Committee's ability to create a clear representation of the "the big picture". Legal "confidentiality" restraints on the sharing of student information need to be eliminated through corrective legislation.

Aging facilities, which require more than routine maintenance to meet current safety standards, impose an additional burden on already strained resources.

NEXT STEPS

1) Community forum - Convene a special session of the Education Partnership Committee, or an ad hoc committee composed of Council members and School Board Members, to receive greater public comment and input on this report. The sub-committee chairs will be present and available to present their detailed findings and recommendations.

2) Review and adoption by School District and the City Council.- After the community has had an opportunity to fully scrutinize and comment on this report, their input and suggestions should be reported back to the School Board and City Council for review and adoption.

3) Identification of resources for recommended staff positions - After the School Board and City Council have reviewed, amended, considered and adopted the proposed plan, including community input, staff should be directed to identify resources to meet the needs of implementing the plan.

4) *Convening Implementation Committee* - After the School Board and City Council have reviewed, amended, considered and adopted the proposed plan, including community input, the proposed members of the Implementation Committee should be solicited to participate, convened and given their charge.

CONCLUSION

Oakland is like most other urban school districts in the 90's. The ability to provide a quality education to the students of the district is hampered by significant issues regarding safety. The School Board and the City Council have made laudable efforts , such as school resource officers, community policing, parent patrol, campus supervisors, conflict resolution training, but there are still outstanding issues to be addressed. Most of those issues can be addressed more effectively and more efficiently through greater collaboration and cooperation of the agencies that serve students. A representative Implementation Committee composed of Agency heads, who have the power to commit resources or make policy changes with their agencies, is necessary to effect such allocations, prioritizations and policy changes.

Other issues, such as restrictive confidentiality legal proscriptions, will require legislative changes. Controversial proposals, like closed campuses and geographic proximity based enrollment, need broad community deliberation, discussion and consensus building.

A focused, concentrated effort to harness existing resources and build stronger relationships between agencies that serve students deserves and requires a single purpose staff, charged with developing prototype safety and emergency preparedness plans and assisting each school site in tailoring the plans to meet their specific needs.

The experience of this Task Force is that many who should have participated did not, because they were overtaxed already. The success of creating and implementing viable safety and emergency preparedness plans at each school site, and the development of viable networks of information and data sharing will depend on the priority allocation of resources to make that possible.

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COMMITTEE CHARGES AND CO-CHAIRS

<Following are the responsibilities with which the committees were charged>

I. TRUANCY REDUCTION:

CO-CHAIRS: DEPUTY SUPERINTENDENT CAROLE QUAN
DEACON ODEST LOGAN

DEFINE: social/psychological/economic root causes & symptoms of truancy in Oakland

IDENTIFY: schools/areas/grade levels most impacted by truancy, the programs most effective in reducing or preventing truancy, the efficiency and cost of current programs and policies, and service gaps

EVALUATE: current coordination and communication linkages between community policing efforts, parent patrols, citizen patrols, home alert, merchant associations, local churches, community based organizations, etc.

DEVELOP: long and short term strategies which prioritize the allocation of resources according to need and efficiency

II. SAFE PASSAGE:

CO-CHAIRS: COUNCIL MEMBER NATE MILEY
BOARD MEMBER JEAN QUAN

DEFINE: social/psychological/economic root causes & symptoms of violence occurring on route to/from school

IDENTIFY: schools/areas/grade levels most impacted by off-campus violence, the programs most effective in reducing or preventing such violence, the efficiency and cost of current programs and policies, and service gaps

EVALUATE: current coordination and communication linkages between community policing efforts, parent patrols, citizen patrols, home alert, merchant associations, local churches, community based organizations, etc.

DEVELOP: long and short term strategies which prioritize the allocation of resources according to need and efficiency, both on a district-wide and site specific basis

III. CAMPUS SAFETY

CO-CHAIRS: BOARD MEMBER BOB SPENCER
DEPUTY CHIEF MIKE MEYERS

DEFINE: social/psychological/economic root causes & symptoms of violence occurring on school campuses

IDENTIFY: schools/areas/grade levels most impacted by on-campus violence, the programs most effective in reducing or preventing such violence, the efficiency and cost of current programs and policies, and service gaps

EVALUATE: short & long term advantages/disadvantages of transferring the OUSD police to PSA; current coordination and communication linkages between campus supervisors, school resource officers, OUSD police, PSA, PTA, Dad's Club, local churches, conflict resolution programs, community based organizations, etc.

DEVELOP: long and short term strategies which prioritize the allocation of resources according to need and efficiency, both on a district-wide and site specific basis

IV. AFTER-SCHOOL & VIOLENCE PREVENTION PROGRAMS

CO-CHAIRS: DIRECTOR CLEVE WILLIAMS (OPRCA)
PAUL BREKE-MEISNER (OUSD)

DEFINE: social/psychological/economic root causes & symptoms of violence occurring between youth

IDENTIFY: schools/areas/grade levels most impacted by violence, the programs most effective in reducing or preventing such violence, the efficiency/cost/funding source/location/target population of current programs and policies, and service gaps

EVALUATE: current coordination and communication linkages between after-school and violence prevention programs

DEVELOP: long and short term strategies which prioritize the allocation of resources according to need and efficiency, both on a district-wide and site specific basis

V. INTER-AGENCY LINKING

CO-CHAIRS: GREG HODGE (URBAN STRATEGIES)
COUNCIL MEMBER SHEILA JORDAN

IDENTIFY: the efficiency/cost/funding source/location/target population of current alternative education programs and policies, and service gaps

EVALUATE. current coordination and communication linkages between alternative education programs, CBO's, OUSD, & PSA

DEVELOP: long and short term strategies prioritize the allocation of resources according to need and efficiency, both on a district-wide and site specific basis

VI. ALTERNATIVE PLACEMENT AND EDUCATION

CO-CHAIRS: FRED TURNER (OUSD)
DEANE CALHOUN (YOUTH ALIVE)

DEFINE: social/psychological/economic need for Village Centers/Beacons

IDENTIFY: potential Village Center sites and key collaborating organizations/staff

EVALUATE: current coordination and communication linkages between key organizations

DEVELOP: long and short term strategies which establish a Village Center planning/evaluation process; prioritize the allocation of resources according to need and efficiency, both on a district-wide and site specific basis

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

A. School Safety Plan

John Bradley, Sergeant, OUSD Police Services
Tony Crear, Alameda County Probation
Rachelle DeStephens, Director, Law & Government Academy
Dr. Phyllis Flory, Principal, Cleveland Elementary School
Gary Gee, Police Department, BART
Shirley Gee, Co-Chair, OUSD Appointee
Larry Green, Lieutenant, Police Services Agency
Robert Hughes, AC Transit/Chief of Protective Services
Jim Meeks, Lieutenant, Youth Services, Police Services Agency
Michael Meyers, Co-Chair, Deputy Chief, Police Services Agency
Ron Solis, Principal, Brewer Jr. High
Bob Spencer, OUSD Board Member
Harold Taylor, Police Chief, BART
Jon Thurston, Deputy District Attorney, Juvenile Division, Office of the District Attorney
Kevin Wiley, Sergeant, Youth Services, Police Services Agency
Zeddie Williams, Lieutenant, Police Services Agency
Wayne, Young , Principal, Oakland High School

B. Truancy

Dr. Joe Adwere-Boamah, OUSD
Paul Brekke-Meisner, Acting Co-Chair, OUSD
Charles Gibson, Lieutenant, Police Services Agency
David Hall, Officer, East Bay Regional Parks Police
Michael Holland, Lieutenant, Police Services Agency
Monica Lamboy, City Manager Analyst, Office of the City Manager
Dean Odest Logan, Co-Chair, Oakland Community Organizations
Carole Quan, OUSD Deputy Superintendent
Jack Radisch, Alameda County District Attorney's Office
Ron Snyder, Oakland Community Organizations
Brian Tremper, Officer, Police Services Agency
Bonita Vinson, Alameda County Probation Department

C. Alternative Placement

Adria Angelo, Program Manager, Alternative Education, OUSD
Paul Brekke-Meisner, Program Manager, Office of Health and Safety Programs, OUSD
Deane Calhoun, Co-chair, Youth Alive
Fred Turner, Co-chair, Director of Student Services, OUSD

D. Safe Passage

Harold Boutte (OUSD Police Unit)
C. Campbell
Patrick Chellen
Gil Cho
Ben Davis
Andre Douyon
Lt. Charles Gibson, Police Services Agency
Vice Mayor Nate Miley
Sylvester Mosley
Carole Quan, Co-Chair Assistant Superintendent, OUSD
Jean Quan, OUSD Boardmember

OAKLAND UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT
Office of the Superintendent

April 1, 1997

TO: Life Enrichment Agency Committee

FROM: Carolyn M. Getridge

SUBJECT: District's Response to the Draft Comprehensive School Safety Plan

The Oakland Unified School District agreed to actively participate in developing a comprehensive school safety plan through providing staff release time and co-chairing several subcommittees. From the inception of the process to develop a comprehensive plan, the District's position was that the issue of school safety required a larger, strategic focus and resources, beyond just what the District could provide. Moreover, the District acknowledges that school safety is a critical issue and concurs with the report that more needs to be done to address the seriousness of safety within the larger community, including the District's 90 school sites.

Notwithstanding, the District takes issue with the draft school safety plan when it suggests that the District is doing very little to address the issue of safety; e.g., that "there is no clear process by which progress (or the lack thereof) is measured..."; and "there is no school safety program in place in the City of Oakland".

The District spends nearly $5 million annually to address safety needs through its police officers, campus supervisors, parent safety patrols and other related programs. In recent years, the District launched several violence prevention initiatives, such as its conflict resolution program, drug free school zones, and Healthy Start Projects to significantly address the health and safety needs of its students and families. In fact, the District is one of very few school districts in California to establish an office, the Office of Health and Safety Programs, that has as its singular focus the health and safety needs of the District's students and parents.

The balance of my comments will focus on the March 4, 1997, transmittal memorandum and the draft comprehensive school safety plan. Specifically, the draft report is confusing, overall findings and recommendations under the School Safety Task Force do not reflect the findings and recommendations of all the committees. For example, under Findings, page 2 of the March 4 memo, states "that the following findings are common to all or most of the subcommittees". Yet, none of the findings nor recommendations from the Truancy Committee or Safe Passage Committee are incorporated or reflected in those listed for the School Safety Task Force.

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Also, the Campus Safety Committee Report contains several inaccuracies. For example:

Finding #1, it is not accurate to state "there is no school safety program in place in the City of Oakland." The school district does have a school safety program (see attached). While this program may not be as comprehensive as one would like, it is a safety program that addresses prevention, intervention and crisis issues. Also, it is not accurate to state that the 1992 School Safety Plan effort "was not mandated, centralized, or monitored..." In fact, the effort was coordinated by the District's General Counsel's Office and the Office of Health and Safety Programs.

Finding #10, "respondents did not feel that campus perimeters were adequately patrolled and secured. They were lukewarm on the idea that a student safety patrol would make campuses safer." The report fails to acknowledge the District's successful Parent Safety Patrol initiative. The Parent Safety Patrols, began in 1993, now operates in 20 school sites and provides "safe passage" for students to and from school. This is a major oversight on the part of the committee.

Recommendation #1A states, "cultural awareness, peer counseling and peer role modeling, conflict resolution, and use of parent and/or community volunteers are examples of some of the techniques that a safety plan could include." Again, this recommendation and the body of work by this committee fails to recognize the significant work on the part of the District to establish a district-wide conflict resolution program in 72 school sites. In addition, there is a two-year old training initiative to establish a team of District cultural diversity trainers to help school sites address this issue.

Recommendation #1C4, states that campus supervisors are "quasi-autonomous employees who work at, but are not always responsible to a specific school site administrator." This statement is inaccurate; all campus supervisors are under the direct supervision of site administrators or their designee.

Recommendation #1E1, states that "new ways of lighting facilities at night and providing for intrusion alarm responses need to be explored." This statement fails to acknowledge the District has nearly completed a program to upgrade all school alarms with automatic resetting mechanisms.

More importantly, it should be noted that the Program Manager, Office of Health and Safety Programs, was never interviewed by this committee for information that could have corrected the above inaccuracies.

The report lacks documentation to back up many of the findings. For example, in the Campus Safety Committee findings #8-12, there is reference to a survey with supporting documentation of the survey instrument itself, the number of respondents by specific sub-group. This is a key piece of data to support these findings. In absence of this documentation, the findings and subsequent recommendations lack of solid basis of validity. Similarly, finding #7, refers to a level of skepticism that district-wide with historical roots in "past failed projects." Yet, the body of the report offers little to support this statement and subsequent recommendation.

The District is strongly committed to creating and maintaining a clean, safe and healthy learning environment. However, the school district cannot and should not bear this difficult issue alone. The District maintains that the issue of school safety is not the sole responsibility of the District. Rather, safety is a community issue affecting the children, their families and the greater Oakland community.

There is much more work to be done to make our schools, and the communities surrounding our schools, safe for our students and families. As the Superintendent for the Oakland Unified School District, I look forward to our mutual work toward developing a community-wide solution and pledge the District's full cooperation in future collaborations involving school safety.

CMG:h
Attachment

OAKLAND UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT
Division of Instruction
Department of Student Services

District Safety Plan

The Oakland Unified School District has instituted a **District Safety Plan** to address school climate, safety and high-risk populations. The plan includes the following: (1) **district-wide initiatives,** (2) **targeted programs for specific student populations or sites,** (3) **pilot programs** and (4) **multi-agency collaborations.** The plan is comprehensive in scope, encompassing prevention, intervention and crisis.

The following is a list of the programs and descriptions:

District-wide Initiatives:

Police Services: OUSD employs eight police officers to patrol during school hours, five days per week, provide periodic truancy sweeps, and staff special student functions such as athletic events. The Police Services Division is operated through a partnership with the Oakland Police Department which assigns a Lieutenant from the Youth Services Division to manage the division.

Special Resource Officers (SRO's): The Oakland Police Department, in partnership with OUSD, assigns a Special Resource Officer to each high-school in the District. Each officer services his/her respective high school and its feeder school system, responding only to school related issues and problems.

Campus Supervisors: The District employs 120 Campus Supervisors at 86 school sites. The supervisors patrol school buildings, yards and parking areas for the purpose of maintaining order and preventing illegal acts. The supervisors receive training on a regular basis from the Office of Health and Safety Programs and Police Services.

Student Attendance Review Board: The SARB process is a multi-agency intervention designed to assist students (and their families) with serious attendance and behavior problems. SARB's are designed to maximize the use of all available resources and services to divert students with school-related problems from dropping out or being referred to the juvenile justice system. Schools make referrals to the District SARB team after the school has exhausted their resources. The SARB develops a contract with the student, which is signed by the student, parent, or guardian and SARB chairperson. The contract states the terms of agreement to ensure regular attendance or improve classroom behavior and is monitored for compliance. During the 1994-95 school year the District held 120 SARB hearings.

Pupil Disciplinary Hearing Panel: The DHP is a non-biased fact finding process, mandated by the State, which school districts must follow when initiating suspension and recommendations for expulsion. The panel operates as an agent of the Board of Education. During the 1994-95 school year, 600 DHP's were held by the District.

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Conflict Resolution Program: This program is a curriculum-based peer support program where students resolve all non-physical conflicts that occur in the classroom or on the school yard. Through a mediation process the student conflict managers help disputants resolve their conflict toward a win/win resolution. To date, 72 schools have been trained and programs implemented; a total of 2,500 students are functioning as conflict mediators and 2,200 teachers have been trained in conflict resolution.

School Uniform Policy: The Board of Education implemented a district-wide mandatory uniform policy in September of the 1995-96 school year. The policy reflects the District's belief that use of school uniforms will positively enhance school safety and improve school climate. The policy impacts students in grades kindergarten through 8th.

Staff Development Training: The District regularly sponsors staff development training that focuses on school climate and safety issues. During the 1995-96 school year, this training will include CPR, blood borne pathogens, conflict resolution, cultural diversity, developing school site safety plans, gang prevention, School Attendance Review Teams, Student Consultation Teams, and campus security.

Temporary Alternative Placement Centers: The TAP program was established for students who are awaiting an expulsion hearing or an alternative placement for students placed on suspended expulsion by the Board of Education. The program is located at three centers in east, central and west Oakland. The majority of students in the TAP program are there for offenses related to assault or weapons. The program provides small group instruction and violence prevention education including conflict resolution and Teens On Target.

Targeted Programs for Specific Student Populations or Sites:

Parent Safety Patrols: Parent patrols have as their focus the safe passage of students to and from school. Parent patrol members walk in pairs within a two or three block radius of a school and are equipped with walkie talkies. They observe and report to the school suspicious behavior, drug and crime related incidents, truant students, and encourage students to move along to school or home. They act as another set of eyes and ears for school sites and provide a safe buffer around the school. Trained by the Office of Health and Safety Programs and the Oakland Unified School District Police Services, parent patrols are currently operative at seven schools in the District with plans for expansion during the 1996-97 school year.

Comprehensive Teenage Pregnancy and Parenting Program: The goal of CTAPPP is to help teen parents in Oakland, an extremely high-risk population for dropping-out of school, to complete high school and become effective, responsible parents. The program provides comprehensive academic and support services, including child care and development programs at three sites - Castlemont, McClymonds and Oakland Technical high schools. During 1994-95, the program served 70 teen parents.

SB 65 Drop-out Prevention Program: The state-funded SB 65 program provides a catalyst in moving targeted schools toward development of a comprehensive drop-out prevention program and greater achievement for all students. The drop-out prevention staff, located at 12 schools, identify and intervene in the lives of those students who are considered "at-risk" of leaving school prematurely while providing related staff development to teachers, resources and services from the community, public and private sectors to support the drop-out prevention efforts at the school.

Teens On Target: TNT is a collaboration between the District and Youth Alive, a non-profit organization located in Oakland and Los Angeles. The program recruits and trains students to become youth advocates/leaders against violence. The youth advocates conduct workshops and presentations at selected school sites, present violence prevention curricula developed by TNT youth and give a voice to youth at public policy hearings on violence. The program currently is based at Castlemont High Schools and focuses primarily on three other sites - King Estates and Elmhurst jr. high schools and the Shiloh TAP Center.

Pilot Programs:

Gang Resistance Education And Training: This curriculum program is a product of the federal government which provides training for law enforcement officers. An officer from OUSD Police Services received the training and has piloted the curriculum at two schools during the past year and a half - Roosevelt Jr. High and Franklin Elementary School.

Gang Risk Intervention Program: G.R.I.P. is a collaboration between the District, the Alameda County Office of Education, the Narcotics Education League, Asian Community Mental Health Services and the Oakland Police Departments gang prevention unit. Based at Calvin Simmons Jr. High, the program includes student and parent workshops, group counseling and alternative activities and is coordinated by a full-time coordinator based at the school.

School/Community Collaboratives: These collaboratives have been established at two sites in the District - Bret Harte Jr. High and Piedmont Avenue Elementary School - focusing on school climate and safety issues. In cooperation with the Office of Health and Safety Programs, the sites are working with organized community groups to improve the school climate and safety on the school site and/or the surrounding community. Bret Harte is working with four Home Alert groups surrounding the school and Piedmont Avenue is working with the Piedmont Avenue Neighborhood School Association.

Multi-Agency Collaborations:

Youth Education Program: This collaboration between the Oakland Police Department, Project Emerge, Office of Parks and Recreation, Narcotics Education League, Youth Alive and the District is developing an anti-drug, anti-weapon pilot program. The program will include the Teens On Target youth inspired anti-violence and anti-drug curriculum, a summer community action project related to the curriculum, and drug and violence suppression activities by the Oakland Police Department around the targeted school sites and communities.

Oakland Violence Prevention and Suppression Working Group: Initiated by Councilmember Nate Miley, this multi-agency collaboration of public and private organizations is developing a city-wide strategic plan to reduce violence, particularly among youth.

Safe and Healthy Kids Initiative: Funded by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, this collaboration was recently funded with a two-year planning grant to develop a strategic plan for Oakland.

Oakland Youth Policy Initiative: Sponsored by Councilmember Sheila Jordan, this collaboration is developing a youth policy for Oakland that, hopefully, will be passed by the City Council in June of this year.

Suppression of Drug Abuse in Schools Program: This program is a collaboration between the District, Oakland Police Department, and two community based organizations and is targeted at five elementary and two junior high schools in Oakland. The program provides drug prevention education curriculum in the classroom, individual and group counseling to students and their families, staff development training for school and law enforcement personnel for handling drug-related problems and offenses, and drug suppression activities by the Oakland Police Department in communities surrounding the targeted schools.

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